



EUROPEAN UNION

OSCE Forum for Security Co-operation No 803 Vienna, 11 November 2015

EU Statement on the Security Situation in and around Ukraine

We reiterate our cautious optimism with a view to the relative calm on the contact line. The increased number of cease-fire violations in recent days as well as the ongoing training activities, in particular in separatist controlled areas remind us however that the situation remains fragile and enhanced efforts are needed to ensure sustainability of the ceasefire. This must be accompanied by further steps to implement fully the Minsk agreements, in order to achieve a sustainable settlement of the conflict, based on full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, independence, unity and territorial integrity.

To this end, we welcome progress in implementing the withdrawal of smaller calibre weapons as foreseen by the Addendum. Manipulation and delay of baseline information risks undermining the fragile progress. Thus we urge all sides, particularly the Russia-backed separatists, to abide by the withdrawal agreement fully and without delay. At the same time, we urge full and unconditional withdrawal of heavy weapons in accordance with the Minsk Package of Measures. We support SMM's introduction of clearer and more effective verification requirements by November 9, as reported by the Chief Monitor last week. We reiterate our concern about the presence and use of heavy weapons in violation of withdrawal lines and concentration beyond them as reported by the SMM. All heavy weapons must be withdrawn and foreign armed formations, military equipment and mercenaries removed from Ukraine. Re-establishing full Ukrainian control over its state border is essential. We underline Russia's responsibility in this regard and call on Russia to use its considerable influence over separatists to meet their commitments.

We remain concerned about continued presence of military equipment and personnel from Russia in separatist controlled areas. We repeat in this context that no full clarification has been provided yet by the Russian Federation regarding the presence of multi launch rocket system TOS-1 Buratino and Zhytel jamming communication station on the separatist controlled territory of eastern Ukraine, as observed by the SMM.

The SMM must be granted full, safe and unrestricted access throughout Ukraine and to all weapons storage sites to be able to monitor the situation on the ground including the

ceasefire implementation and verification of weapons withdrawal. We deplore any attempts to restrict SMM's monitoring activities, particularly in separatist controlled areas north-east of Mariupol and along the state border with Russia.

As stated recently by Chief monitor Apakan and Ambassador Sajdik, mines and unexploded ordnance continue to represent a particular challenge for the security of the civil population as well as for the OSCE monitors. At the same time comprehensive demining is an important precondition for stepping up efforts in the economic and humanitarian fields. We therefore call on the security working group of the TCG to agree to a framework for mine action, especially as the winter is approaching.

Mr Chairman, we recall our unwavering support to the sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence of Ukraine, and call upon Russia to do likewise. We urge Russia to strictly observe these fundamental principles that it has itself invoked many times and to contribute, by acts and public pronouncements, to stabilise the situation and reverse moves that contravene these principles. We reiterate our strong condemnation of the illegal annexation of Crimea and Sevastopol by the Russian Federation and we will not recognise it.

The Candidate Countries the FORMER YUGOSLAV REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA*, MONTENEGRO* and ALBANIA*, the Country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and Potential Candidate BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA, and the EFTA countries ICELAND and NORWAY, members of the European Economic Area, as well as UKRAINE, the REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA, GEORGIA and SAN MARINO align themselves with this statement.

* The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.